

MEDIA ADVISORY
USDA Satellite Features Feed
January 14, 2010
Contact: USDA-TV (202) 720-6445 or (202) 720-3319

FEATURE – USDA HELPS FARMERS WITH IRRIGATION

INTRO: Water is always a concern for farmers in south Texas. USDA is helping producers there to more efficiently use water. The USDA's Bob Ellison has more. (1:27)

SOUTH TEXAS FARMER SAM RUIZ GROWS A WIDE VARIETY OF CROPS ON HIS FAMILY'S TWO THOUSAND ACRE FARM. THAT MEANS WATER IS A VALUABLE RESOURCE. THE U-S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE IS HELPING RUIZ AND OTHER RIO GRANDE VALLEY FARMERS UPGRADE IRRIGATION SYSTEMS.

Sam Ruiz, Cameron Co., TX Farmer: When all the irrigation districts here in the Rio Grande Valley were set up back in the thirties, forties. They were set up in mortar and joint pipes. Well those pipes are now obsolete. They break and leak everywhere. So now with the help of NRCS we're upgrading those pipelines to better more efficient plastic pipelines.

N-R-C-S ALSO HELPED RUIZ AND HIS COLLEAGUES COMPLETE PROJECTS ON THEIR LAND TO PRESERVE WATER RESOURCES.

Sam Ruiz, Cameron Co., TX Farmer: NRCS here in Cameron County has helped us out by cost sharing land-leveling, which helps us use our water more efficiently.

THESE IRRIGATION UPGRADES ARE HELPING RIO GRANDE VALLEY PRODUCERS SAVE WATER AND MONEY.

Sam Ruiz, Cameron Co., TX Farmer: We bury lines underneath the crop. We filter the water. And we just put on the amount of water that we need. We can water today and we can harvest tomorrow. The hands won't be in the mud. It makes better use of our water resource.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CONTACT YOUR LOCAL N-R-C-S OFFICE. FOR THE U-S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE I'M BOB ELLISON.